

Calendar No. 635

106TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
106-317

UPPER HOUSATONIC VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY ACT OF 2000

JUNE 27, 2000.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2421]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the bill (S. 2421) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing an Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of S. 2421 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing an Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

The Housatonic River region of New England is home to many of the nation's first industrial iron sites, which produced iron used to make weapons for the Revolutionary War. Furthermore, the area includes homes of historical significance belonging to Edith Wharton and author Herman Melville as well as the Monument Mountain Reservation, where Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne picnicked. The area also has great outdoor recreational resources and is the base for much of Connecticut's tourism business.

S. 2421 authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a study to determine the feasibility and suitability of designating the Upper Housatonic Valley as a National Heritage Area.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 2421 was introduced by Senators Lieberman, Dodd, Kerry, and Kennedy on April 13, 2000. Testimony from witnesses on this bill was included in the record of the hearing held by the Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation on May 25, 2000. At its business meeting on June 7, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered S. 2421 favorably reported.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AND TABULATION OF VOTES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on June 7, 2000, by a unanimous vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass S. 2421 as described herein.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 designates the bill's short title.

Section 2 defines the term "Secretary" as the Secretary of the Interior, and describes the areas in Connecticut and Massachusetts that comprise the "Study Area."

Section 3 directs the Secretary to conduct a study of the Study Area that addresses 8 specific elements with respect to the area's resources, community support, and existence of a potential management entity. The Secretary must consult with State Historic Preservation Officers, State Historical Societies, and other appropriate organizations, and must complete and submit the report to Congress within 3 years after the date of enactment of this legislation.

Section 4 authorizes the appropriation of \$300,000 to carry out the purposes of this legislation.

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of the cost of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, June 9, 2000.

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for S. 2421, the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area Study Act of 2000.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Deborah Reis and Ali Aslam.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

S. 2421—Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area Study Act of 2000

S. 2421 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing an Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts. The bill would require the Secretary to report on the national, historical, and cultural resources within the study area which merit recognition and conservation.

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that the federal government would spend about \$300,000 over the next three years to implement S. 2421. The bill would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. S. 2421 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Deborah Reis and Ali Aslam. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out S. 2421. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of S. 2421, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

On May 23, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources requested legislative reports from the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget setting forth Executive agency recommendations on S. 2421. These reports had not been received at the time the report on S. 2421 was filed. When the reports become available, the Chairman will request that they be printed in the Congressional Record for the advice of the Senate. The testimony provided by the National Park Service at the Subcommittee hearing follows:

STATEMENT OF KATHERINE H. STEVENSON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the subcommittee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 2421, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing an Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The Department of the Interior supports this legislation. S. 2421 would authorize a suitability and feasibility study to determine the potential for establishing a national heritage area along sixty miles of the Upper Housatonic River, in twenty-six towns in Connecticut and Massachusetts. State historic preservation officers, State historical societies and other appropriate organizations would be consulted in conducting the study.

The study would include a number of components we believe are helpful for public review. These components are based on our experience with heritage areas previously designated by Congress. The components include analysis and documentation that the study area:

1. Has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources representing distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continued use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes non-contiguous resources and active communities;
2. Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;
3. Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic features;
4. Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;
5. Contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the study area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;
6. Includes residents, business interests, non-profit organizations, and local and State governments involved in the planning who have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;
7. Has a potential management entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, non-profit organizations and local and state governments to develop a heritage area consistent with continued local and state economic activity;
8. Is depicted on a conceptual boundary map supported by the public.

In conducting the study, the National Park Service would assist the communities in the valley in determining their own sense of how best to work together to protect those resources. A description of the area's resources would be developed and the theme or themes for the area would be identified. We would also work with State and local agencies to address the interests of local governments in preserving their heritage, maintaining their local economy and determining the means for that preservation, whether through a national heritage area, a state heritage area, or regional effort. Funding for this study would be subject to the availability of appropriations and National Park Service priorities among the many requirements for studies.

The Housatonic River has played an important role in the growth and development of the valley. The earliest

residents were Native Americans who settled along the river's banks to farm and fish. The first English colonists arrived in 1639 at the mouth of the river and later began farming in the upper reaches. Agriculture was a major activity throughout the valley and is evident today.

During the 18th and 19th century, waterpower played a prominent role in the region's industrial development, with the remnants of dams, millraces, and furnaces still seen today. The iron industry evolved based on the high-grade ore found in the hills of northwestern Connecticut. Forged products included utensils and armaments used in the American Revolution. Throughout the valley more than forty blast furnaces were active over time. The last furnace closed in 1923.

In the 1800s, the area was known for manufacturing and mining. The region was the first in the country to make paper, and by the end of the Civil War there were at least twenty-eight paper mills in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, alone. However, the onset of the 20th century brought a decline of industrialization due to inadequate railroad and roadways, as well as competition from larger industries outside the region.

The resources that illustrate the area's history in agriculture, iron making and industry and the growing public commitment to heritage conservation, make the Upper Housatonic Valley worthy of the proposed study.

This concludes my prepared testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee notes that no changes in existing law are made by the bill S. 2421, as ordered reported.

